

Dear Breeders: Stop. Just stop.

Heather

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Seriously – if you can't do it right, just don't do it at all. This is definitely a stab piece against dog breeders, but not for the reasons you're probably thinking. I'm not here to condemn dog breeders or spout the "adopt don't shop" religion. **The few good, responsible breeders that exist have my full support and respect.** Of my five dogs, two were purchased from breeders, and I will most certainly buy from breeders again. I like knowing my dogs' bloodlines, and I will pay the money for a dog with health clearances. There are *plenty* of reasons to get a puppy from a breeder (though there are also plenty of reasons not to, as well).



http://bourbondog.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/img_3670.jpg

Rugby (he's so frigging handsome, isn't he?)



http://bourbondog.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/img_3101.jpg

Delaney

So what am I bitching about here? The breeders who don't do their jobs. The breeders who just take their deposits and hand puppies off to the first people who write them a check. The breeders who don't take their dogs back when the homes don't work out. Here's the bottom line: if you choose to bring a living being (in this case, a puppy) into this world, **you better as hell make sure that animal goes to the right home.** I don't give a shit, frankly, if you have the most beautiful, healthy, conformation-perfect, *whatever* litters in the world – if you don't make sure that puppy is going to a home that knows what they're doing, you suck. **You suck and you need to just stop.**

I'm the director of a small, hard-working rescue in the South that focuses on Australian Shepherds and other herding breeds. We get a lot – *a lot* – of dogs. We pull from shelters, as well as take in owner surrenders. In the month of March, our organization received fifteen forms from owners wishing to surrender their dogs. Of these fifteen, seven were for purebred Aussies purchased from breeders. All seven dogs were under three years old. Let me spell this out for those who may not see what I'm getting at – every single one of these dogs was shopped for, purchased, and sent home, and then was tossed to the side when they started acting like, *gasp!*, Aussies.

Back to my rescue for a hot second. We have an adoption process, and it super-duper sucks. I mean, we put people through the ringer. We make them fill out a long-ass application, we ask lots of personal questions, then we call their veterinarians, their neighbors, even their coworkers, and we ask them even more personal questions. If after all that we still think they're pretty cool, we send a volunteer out to snoop around their house! **All just to adopt one damn homeless dog.**

So here's my question: if a rescue, comprised of a bunch of weird dog-ladies who have jobs and families and very little spare time, can manage to care enough about some unwanted reject-dogs to make sure that the people who are adopting them aren't losers, why can't a breeder? I mean, these dogs are born in your homes; you raise them! You probably raised their parents. You're putting blood, sweat, maybe tears, and a lot of Clorox into the puppy endeavor. So why aren't you being more careful as to where your puppies are going?

I don't want to hear the excuses, because you can't give me one that justifies your actions, or rather, your lack thereof. It's too time-consuming? Too invasive? You'll never place puppies? Guess what – you don't have to breed those puppies in the first place. You really don't.

Yeah, this is another typical rescue-fanatic “down with the dog breeders” rant. We're crazy, and we make your lives as breeders such a bigger pain in the ass than you really would like us to. *But wait!* Who is it that gets to fix the mistakes you make? Oh yeah, that's me. Yep – your dog comes to my house. Your gorgeous, pedigreed, neurotic, aggressive, bat-shit-crazy dog with no training and no socialization comes to live in my spare bedroom until I can get it to a point where it can be a member of society again. Do you know how it feels to look at an eight month old dog and wonder at what point you need to make “that” decision (you know, the one that involves a needle)?



http://bourbondog.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/img_3290.jpg

Howie – SUCH a handsome Aussie boy. What a shame he had to be born blind and deaf because somebody didn't know what they were doing (or didn't care).

Maybe you're a great breeder, or even a great dog trainer. Maybe your dogs are the image of perfection mentally and physically. None of that matters, however, if you're breeding puppies and sending them to people who don't know what they're doing. **You're putting hand grenades in the laps of toddlers.** And ultimately, when that bomb goes off, you're just as much to blame. Good dogs and good breeds are being *ruined* because they're ending up in the wrong hands.

So stop – stop cutting corners, and stop passing the buck. Breeding is more than good bloodlines, it's more than Best of Breed, and it's more than getting a merit badge by your name. If you're going to call yourself a dog breeder, **do it right** and take *complete* responsibility for the dogs you bring into this world, not just for the first eight weeks of their lives.

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